



NEWS RELEASE

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State announces new distance learning opportunities for Hoosiers, National Guard members

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. – Gov. Joe Kernan announced today that beginning Jan. 1, 2005, every Hoosier, including returning Indiana National Guard members, will have access to new online skills training to assist them in pursuing new job opportunities.

“This is an important step in helping Hoosiers identify and upgrade their skills as they seek out new career opportunities,” said Kernan. “We believe these web-based training programs give workers more ways to make themselves more marketable in the changing workplace by providing greater access to training programs, ultimately resulting in stronger employees for Hoosier businesses.”

Building on the success state’s new workforce development initiative, **Indiana@Work**, the free training and remediation courses also will be made available in new distance learning centers throughout the state and in eight National Guard Learning Centers.

At least two new distance learning sites in each of Indiana’s 92 counties will be opened through a licensing partnership between Ivy Tech State College, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and the state’s 16 Workforce Investment Boards. The software licenses also allow the sites to offer services free of charge over the Internet.

Returning troops will be able to utilize the distance learning tools through National Guard Learning Centers in **Bloomington, Edinburgh, Evansville, Fort Wayne, Lafayette, Muncie, South Bend and Valparaiso**.

“A large number of Indiana Guard members have begun returning home from active duty . These troops are some of our most skilled workers and we want to do everything we can to ensure their smooth transition back into the workforce,” said Kernan. “Through Indiana@Work we can now offer skills assessments, job matching services and these new online tools at their bases so they can get a running start from day one.”

The two interactive training systems, KeyTrain and Worldwide Interactive Network’s Career Solutions, support WorkKeys®, the skills assessment piece of Indiana@Work. These software packages provide remedial training for users wanting to improve skills before or after taking their skills assessment. In addition, Hoosiers with access to the Internet will be given a personal login to access these training tools at home.

In addition to the new distance learning sites, which will be designated by local officials, the training programs will also be available at a variety of other sites. The state’s WorkOne and WorkOne Express Centers, Family and Social Services Agency regional offices, Ivy Tech State College campuses, College Cooperative Distance Learning sites and Purdue University’s Extension Centers will all offer the courses to the public.

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"We are pleased to partner with the state of Indiana to offer this extraordinary service," said Gerald Lamkin, president of Ivy Tech State College. "With these new resources, targeted at the individual, Indiana will have a workforce with refreshed and improved skills and higher assessment scores. This leads to better jobs for all job seekers and a stronger, more capable workforce for the state as a whole."

Indiana@Work, a joint effort between the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and the Indiana Department of Commerce, builds around Energize Indiana's four targeted sectors: advanced manufacturing, information technology, life sciences and high-tech distribution. Available through the state's WorkOne and WorkOne Express Centers, Indiana@Work has made skills assessments available to more than 27,000 Hoosiers and companies statewide have requested nearly 700 job profiles since its inception in January 2004.

WorkKeys® skills assessments, a comprehensive system developed by ACT® that determines and categorizes the skills necessary for a specific job, is the centerpiece of Indiana@Work. It also matches the individual's skill level to particular job requirements and serves as a foundation for training programs that close skill gaps and develop a more capable workforce.

Job profiling, the employer segment of WorkKeys®, helps businesses identify the skills and skill levels needed for workers to be successful on the job. Professional job analysts work with experienced employees to define the duties of each occupation and together, they create specific job profiles.

Through its various programs and initiatives, DWD is charged with continually improving the Hoosier workforce by assisting companies to create new jobs and improve employee skills. The agency offers a variety of training and educational grants, partners with the state's 27 WorkOne Centers, administers the unemployment insurance system, provides labor market information, assists employers with preparing workers for layoffs, and closures and operates the a statewide job placement service

For more information on this or other DWD programs, call 1-888-WorkOne or visit the web site at www.workforce.IN.gov.

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